



# HIROSHIMA

@ DAYBREAK

**"What the \*#@! Was that?"**

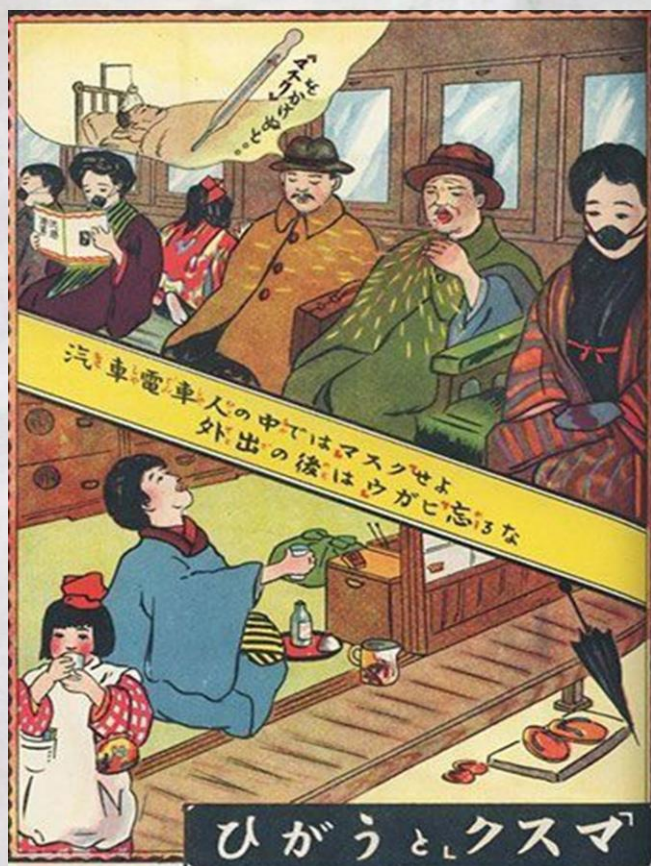
- Mayor of Hiroshima, August 1945











This story has interesting origins that I still remember clearly as the main character here is a guy named Max (Maximillian) who we had met in the early days of our real estate venture in 1945 Berlin. He was a young man of ambition that had been a part of an unofficial Swedish Trade Mission during the waning days of Nazi control of Berlin. He proved himself rather helpful in initially getting us into the room with the still well-functioning bureaucracy of the Nazi Government. As a smart man, a quick learner and as I said he was rather ambitious (we didn't need competition with our business plan there in Berlin); we convinced him to open a new market...a fresh pasture where he could do even better in







# 防毒面の種類と用途



# 其毒消の物毒汚るお入ス力爛糜



the coming collapse of Tokyo with the pending American Invasion of the Japanese Home Islands. Being the ambitious young man that he was; he bought in whole-line-and-sinker.

I secured him letters of Introduction from a few of the more senior bigwigs that had lost all sense and had failed to book passage to the a new home in the Alps of South America (Argentina and Chile) in time or had somehow missed the boat .

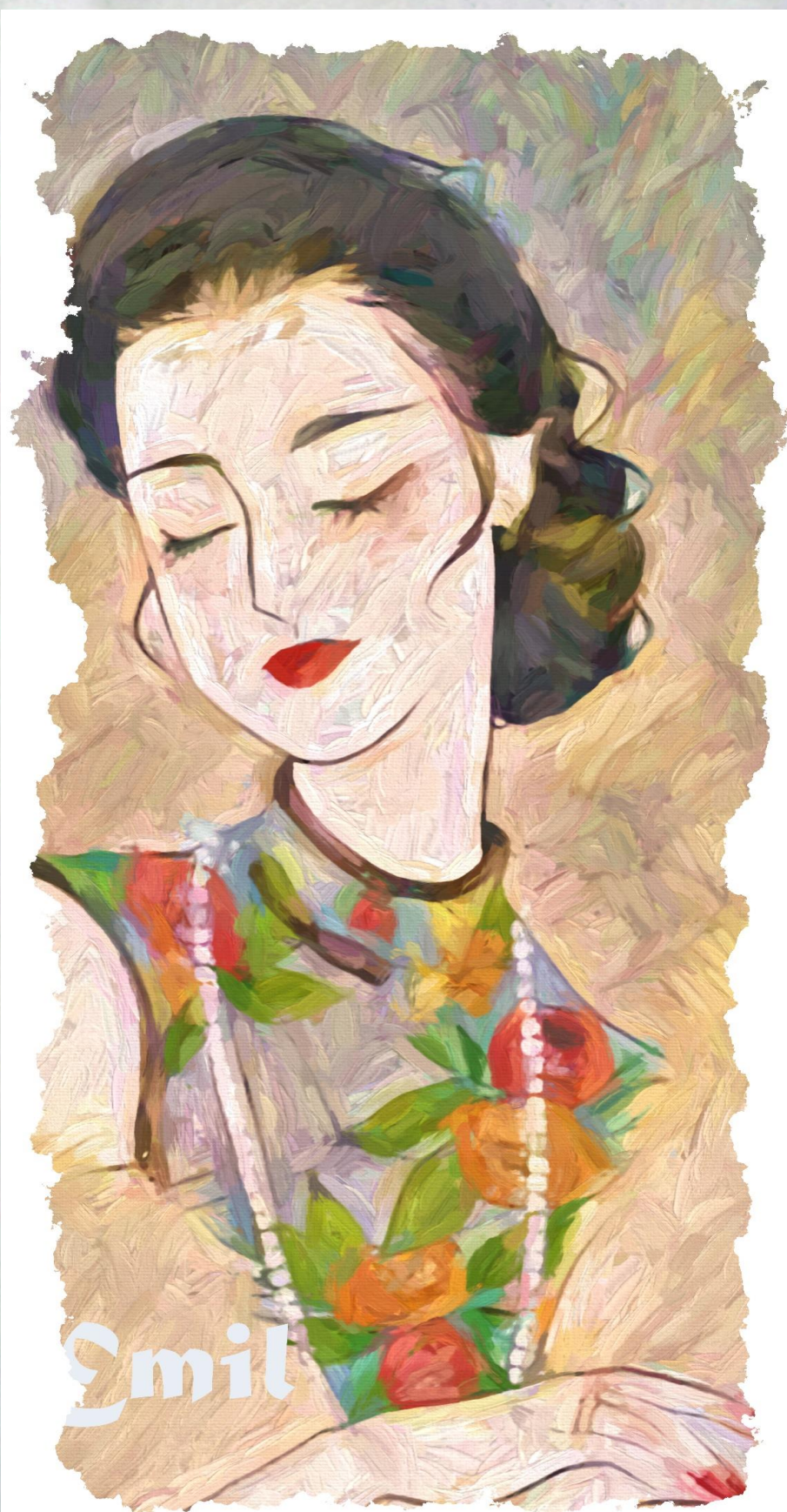
We secured him passage on one of the last unreported U-Boat Cruises to the Southern Seas and here are the letters that he wrote to Emil – to whom he was much stricken with.

Seine













**July 3rd, 1945**

**Dear Emil,**

First let me say that I hope you receive this late post but, Mister Nakamura (own trustful postman) assures me that the mail is still going to Berlin with no problem while admitting that is a bit harder now after the fall of Berlin, the blockage of Tokyo Bay and the constant air raids that ravage much of the countryside (but not here in our beautiful city of Hiroshima)...seems that there is no longer a central, German Postal Authority but, he does assure me that from his understanding is that the Russian Zone (where you are) is much better organized because they kept the honorable German Postmen without skipping more than a few days for them to shoot many of those top Nazis.

Seems smart to me...NO! It does!

Get rid of the bad management while not tossing out the good workers, the logistics of a functional system.









In practice, these Soviets are almost as smart like the Japanese Imperial Armies were in China...

*"Don't get off into the weeds of management and recreate a new system when it just needed a little kinder care and fine-tuning (like my father, who spent his life in the watch repair business in Zurich use to wisely teach me) to run perfect, again."*

Never seem to talk much about my father and it just struck me rather odd that I would now being quoting him here in my correspondence with you. Funny?

So here is hoping that you are reading this instead of some cranky Russian Commissar trying to discover what he is sure to be our super-secret code...I put this line in the letter just in case he is reading and I figure it would be quite a lark to amuse myself with the mere sight of them sitting around some big conference table trying to break our code.

Have you been able to get in contact with Mimmie?









Yes, my friend, I understand that Claudie says that she got married early on during the war but, the gent is a German Officer and his likes are not well welcomed there in post-war France...buyer's remorse. Maybe?

Might be your last chance to find out...

I am just saying my friend. I hear from the secret BBC Broadcasts that the trains there will be back up and running very soon and need I remind you that Berlin is ONLY like what; six-or-so hours from Paris.

Nuff said!

Much has changed since I was of the good fortune to get those letters of introduction that you had Seine secure for me from those rather well-place, former government types in Berlin...

How does he do that?

Those letters have allowed my group to set up a replica of









your real estate investment business plan here in Nippon but, Tokyo is way too far gone...

Those Americans have lived up to their threats of

*"Bombing them back to the stone age..."*

Instead, our local contacts with the Ministry of Trade (very sharp cadre of young, wounded war veterans who I am sure would have been future captains of industry here in Nippon had the war gone more in their favor) suggested some better venues and locations for our investment fund(s) and this is how I came to find this lovely riverside city of Hiroshima.

The city is almost untouched by the war other than I see a lot of memorials about as it seems that the city has given more than its fair share of its youth to those never-ending wars in Asia (that is what the old woman who lives in the apartment flat above me calls the war and does have cause to be bitter as the War has taken first her husband and now two of her four sons and now she tries very hard to make due on her meager widow's rations card).









I have inquired about and I have yet to come away with any good reason that this city lays in total contrast to Tokyo.

Most just shrug it off and say that the local gods (ancient spirits) have protected them although, I am figuring it has to due to the fact(s) that there is no major garrison and Mister Schmitt agrees that the Americans will need a few intact cities to set up their occupational operations come the invasion which he believes may come as early as this September or October (got to get ashore and wrap the battle up before the long winter sets in).

By the way, Mister Schmitt says that he does remember you from those old days in Nanking and hopes that you and your crew are all well...He says that he is jealous that you are living in Berlin and he is still here with the German Ministry.

He has talked for almost endless hours about your tales of those final days of Nanking and I am sure that (at least) a few are more-or-less truth. HA-HA!









Sometimes, I feel bad rooting for the start of this invasion in which millions of lives will be offered up to the futility of this continued struggle especially, when it serves only to further my economic bottle line.

Still, I remember that you had much the same doubts when your crew arrived in Berlin in April of this year and it is not lost on me what you said was the key to overcoming any sense of direct guilt or fear of exploitation of the locals. I remember what you said

*"Business is business and morals are moral but, never the twain SHOULD MIX OR MENGLE..."*

I see you point now.

Being Swiss by passport is a true plus with staying on here and in offering us a sense of security. Even at that, most locals don't really blame Americans for the war, all of the death and the terribly brutal air war being waged against them; the general opinion (expressed outside the public domain) is that









Nippon picked a fight and may well lose...they believe that is the risk of war and seem prepared to deal honestly with what is to come. The biggest complaint and curse that they have about the war is that it could have been over years ago had the American President not be so cruel and demanded for "Unconditional Surrender."

Almost every discussion concludes with their confusion in how such great friends could so quickly become such bitter enemies and to a person, they believe that it isn't the American People who are refusing to sit down and talk through the many issues that separate them but (rather) it is that Demon Roosevelt and all of those greedy bankers who felt that Nippon had cheated them out of the fortunes that they had so greedily amassed by the years of their own endless exploitation of the Great Chinese People.

I don't go there! I have no opinion either way as you said in Berlin "It ain't my fight...I am just here to get rich off of all this stupidity that they call a World War..."









Well, my friend, the hour is late, seeing that we have a busy day ahead and with that thought I will close this post and wish you continued health and prosperity!

You devoted friend,

**Max**









Emil









10 July 1945

# Dear Emil,

We have just returned from spending the larger part of the later part of the evening drinking at what seemed to be a sundry tour through a rather large assortment of "Snake Town's" better dive bars that even to this late day in the war still populate up-and-down the alleys of Sakagura-dori Street ending with an exciting late-night ride home in a Hiroden Streetcar through the blackout Streets of Hiroshima that were completely filled and at some points, were overflowing with what seemed to be masses of mostly young people (kids by pre-war standards) and an interesting assortment of foreign workers either going home or off to start yet another shift at their factory jobs (which I am amazed are more productive or so they tell me than before the American Air War started in earnest back in late 1943).





Emil







I found freedom in that I and most foreign workers are able to live in peace and harmony with the vast majority of the local population. I don't know if this is by design or just the true character of the locals showing through.

I have yet found anyone (other than a random Korean or two and even then, their main complaint was that they didn't receive the same wages as a local working in the same occupation) who defined their status as a "slave labor."

I will on occasion get a long stare or a second look and even then, it is more out of curiosity than anger (maybe, they thought that the invasion had already started – as many have mistaken me for either German or in rarer cases, an American Tourist).

Upon arrival home, we discovered the nearby café had just opened its door to serve breakfast to those returning home from the overnight shift and dined on excellent okonomiyaki (Japanese savory pancakes) and seeing that we were on the verge of a rather serious hangover from a long night of drinking;









the shop lady took kindness on this small cadre of Foreign Devils and supplied us a small bottle of Sake or as she said the “hair of the dog” which had so badly bitten us.

It was appreciated and I am told that it is a local cure for medicating the full extent of the approaching maelstrom of an ugly Sake Hangover.

Believe it or not...it did the trick and after being further bracing up by multiple cups of the strongest breakfast tea (from Ceylon) that I had ever had; I was ready to face the day with vigor and even a stride to my step.

It was near mid-morning when we went to join Mister Schmitt for an interesting tour of City Hall and we were offered the great fortune to have an audience with the mayor and several of senior advisors.

The honorable Mayor Mister Awaya is a very remarkable man and the city should consider itself very fortunate to have a man of his caliber at the helm. Back in 1933, most of the









smart money had ruled his career over when stood tall in the middle of the scandalous civil war between the country's police force and God's Warriors (the Imperial Nippon Army) but then again; most had never given him much if any chance given his very outspoken Christian Believes...and still here he stands as the mayor of this lovely town...Our only conflict with the mayor was not really his own fault but in that he carried out the military's direct order to demolish buildings to create firebreaks in the event that Americans would target Hiroshima. This was more than not a serious death blow to our business plan and he made it even more difficult in pushing the military to offer proper payment(s) for those families/business men evicted.

I lament that unlike what happened in Berlin and given Seine's connection in securing all those bales of German Marks as all the liberated French Banks were freely tossing out all their German Currency into nearby landfills giving your crew near unlimited funds to buy up properties all about the









city...Instead, what we have here and much to their credit, the Imperial Army while it is rumored that they have been routed in much of the Pacific are strongly entrenched and still hold as much of China as they did in 1942 and due to this, there are no bales of Nippon Currency floating down the Shanghai River to fund our operation.

I get what Seine warned about, every venue is a different set of problems and hopefully...I sure hope that we can overcome all this and still turn a good profit here in Hiroshima as I have grown fond of this city and have made several nice friends.

Even here, I must say that Mayor Awaya struck me as a complete, old-school gentleman and more than your standard class act when he took the time to tell us that the hardest job (as mayor of Hiroshima) had been to demolish city buildings and homes to create firebreaks.

I never realized the extent of the Christian Community here and was equally impressed that Foreign Devils and locals







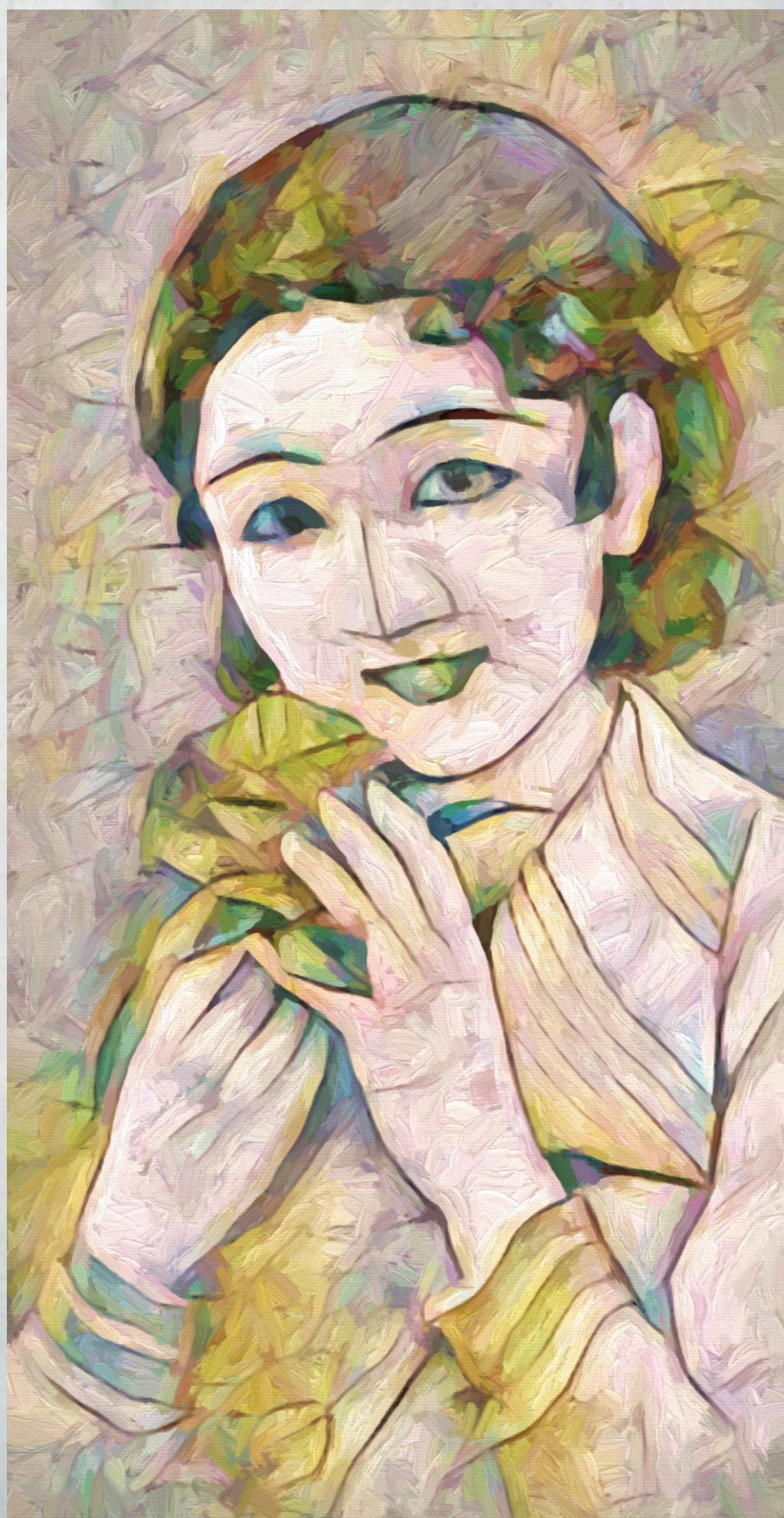


came together so well in brotherhood and I have been told that there is another community in Northern Japan where Christianity first took hold...

I believe they said that it was Nagasaki.

This was interesting (I overheard this being discussed at Wednesday Night's Fellowship Meeting at the little church which we attend Sunday Services - right outside the Shintenchu Shopping District) in that both Hiroshima and Nagasaki have escaped any bombing raids while most other cities across the land have been burnt to the ground by the "Fire-Storm" Raids by the American Air Fleets. The general belief from this meeting was that this was a direct result of both cities being the center(s) for the Christian Faith but, I am still inclined to side with your friend from the German Trade Ministry that the Allies would need several intact cities to run their occupation out of and both cities have well established transportation options and port facilities...making them rather good candidates for such duty.









Mister Schmitt has invited us to a weekend holiday at Kagura Monzen Toji Village where I am told there are several world-class hot springs and a rather heady nightlife (even in wartime).

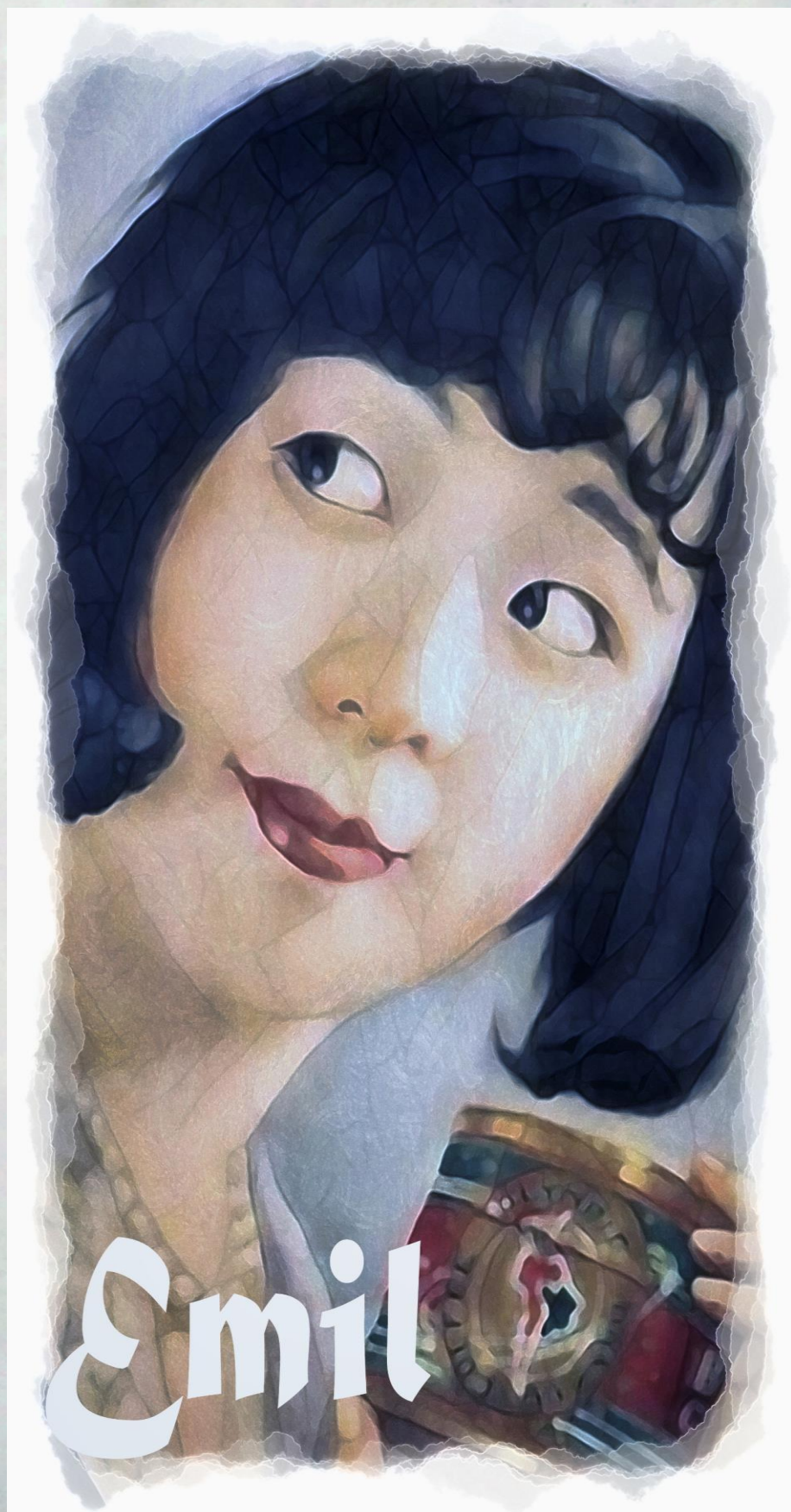
So, I will write later to further our business efforts and please assure Seine that we are men of our word and will ensure that he will get the 10% off-the-top as we had agreed to at our last meeting with him (in Berlin at the end of May 1945).

Just returned for a late evening at Shukkei-en Garden.

This is a beautiful park that I am told was once a royal garden that had been donated to the people of the town back in (I believe I was told) 1940 in appreciation of the faithfulness of the locals to the continued wars in the west.

It is nearly the perfect place to meet and disappear into the back bushes for many of the young or even the young at heart especially since the city still practices very serious night-time blackouts to discourage American Bombers finding the city by chance.









This garden was a perfect place for a Foreign Devil to spend a quiet evening of star glancing with his favorite local gal which, in my case, was our apartment house owner's eldest daughter, Lekki especially since it is socially unacceptable for young Japanese Women to even show the slightest interest in a Foreign Devil like myself. I have even heard those terrible rumors of what happened when a young factory gal was discovered with a child from a Korean Guest Worker...I won't go into details as I am not sure if the story is real or was created by local authorities to put the fear of the gods in any young Japanese Girl who might think to fancy any non-Japanese suitor.

Again, Mister Schmitt has proven to be a wise and helpful gentleman but, for now...after a nice evening with this young lady, I might be willing to venture to a labor camp to see her again. As always, Emil...my open regards to you and crew.

Your friend!

**Max**





Emil





Emil





Emil





12 July 1945

# Dear Emil,

It was said and I do confess to the truth that the Japanese language is extremely difficult to learn correctly. Thank goodness for all of the assistance we have received from those nice young men assigned by the Ministry of Trade and that they are so well-versed in multiple languages that we have found little problem or repose from our dealings with most of the locals.

Mister Schmitt has also been a sterling virtue in our business dealings with city and community officials here in Hiroshima - although, I must admit my amazement to the many officials and to their command of near perfect American English.

There is a funny story here as I was to discover that more than a few of these government officials had ties to both





# Emil







America and Europe in the years before the war.

More than a few had studied overseas in Western Colleges or Graduate Schools, several had actually lived in the United States in the years before the war and one secretly professed that he was an American Citizen but had been trapped here on the outbreak of the war.

listening to people retell their adventures in the Western Nations made me rather sad that they should be involved in this bitter battle seemingly to the death due to governments with such outdated 19th Century believes/customs, differing opinions global real estate/urban development/resource allocation(s) and the utter greed of rouge Wall Street Bankers trying to play both sides against the middle to recoup the billions that they have profess to have lost with the Sino-Japanese Wars.

It is a wonderment to me that two societies that have much more in common than they differ, that do have such a long history of friendship and are full of common folks that do









have so much goodwill could be propelled so easily into this bitter clash of Titans. It makes even less sense when the locals are full of fond memories of the west and especially America.

I don't take sides as I do believe that Pearl Harbor was a bitter disappointment to the good nature and friendship that most Americans had for Japan before December 7th, 1941.

I get it!

No doubt that this was an underhanded and mean hearted attack but, then so is the American Air War that has killed so many hundreds of thousands of generally "American loving" people.

Then again, I haven't forgot your wisdom in that this isn't my fight and my success depends upon the complete collapse of the current social order and seeing that it is becoming clear that this city is being spared from the horrors of this war and with it, a mass influx of people and families seeking refuge





Emil





from the bombing - this has already driven real estate values up at the few properties that we have already secured .

With this thought, there is a now found sense of urgency and need for striking before prices go up further.

I still respectfully disagree with your observation(s) about revisiting the Tokyo Real Estate Market as you aren't here and you haven't seen the entire sections of the city that aren't even rubble...entire blocks of complete urban removal so that only the scorched, blackened earth remains. Looking about, it seems unlikely that they will ever restore that city little-a-lone build a completely new city on its ashes.

Just can't see that!

No! Hiroshima seems the way to go and the place to be at as we go into the dawn of this new age that will come with an end to the war.

Although, I am impressed by what I have heard about Nagasaki as it too seems to be a northern version of









Hiroshima. I have talked with the fellows and we are planning a visit for mid-September given that the invasion doesn't curtail us being about to go.

Transportation outside this safe zoon is with great risk although it is manageable as the local military officials have deployed an advance "Air Warning" System that gives much advanced warning of new waves of American Bombers has they must approach over still vast section(s) of the sea to reach Nippon's Home Islands.

While there is no seeming way to determine their actual targets, there is at least warning that they are on their way.

I was taken back by how open local officials were in explaining their Air Warning Systems but, then again; we are foreign investors and it is in their interest to squish any fears that we might hold about furthering our investments.

While there is a sizable Christian Community here, the main local religion seems to be an off-shoot of the Shinto Religion









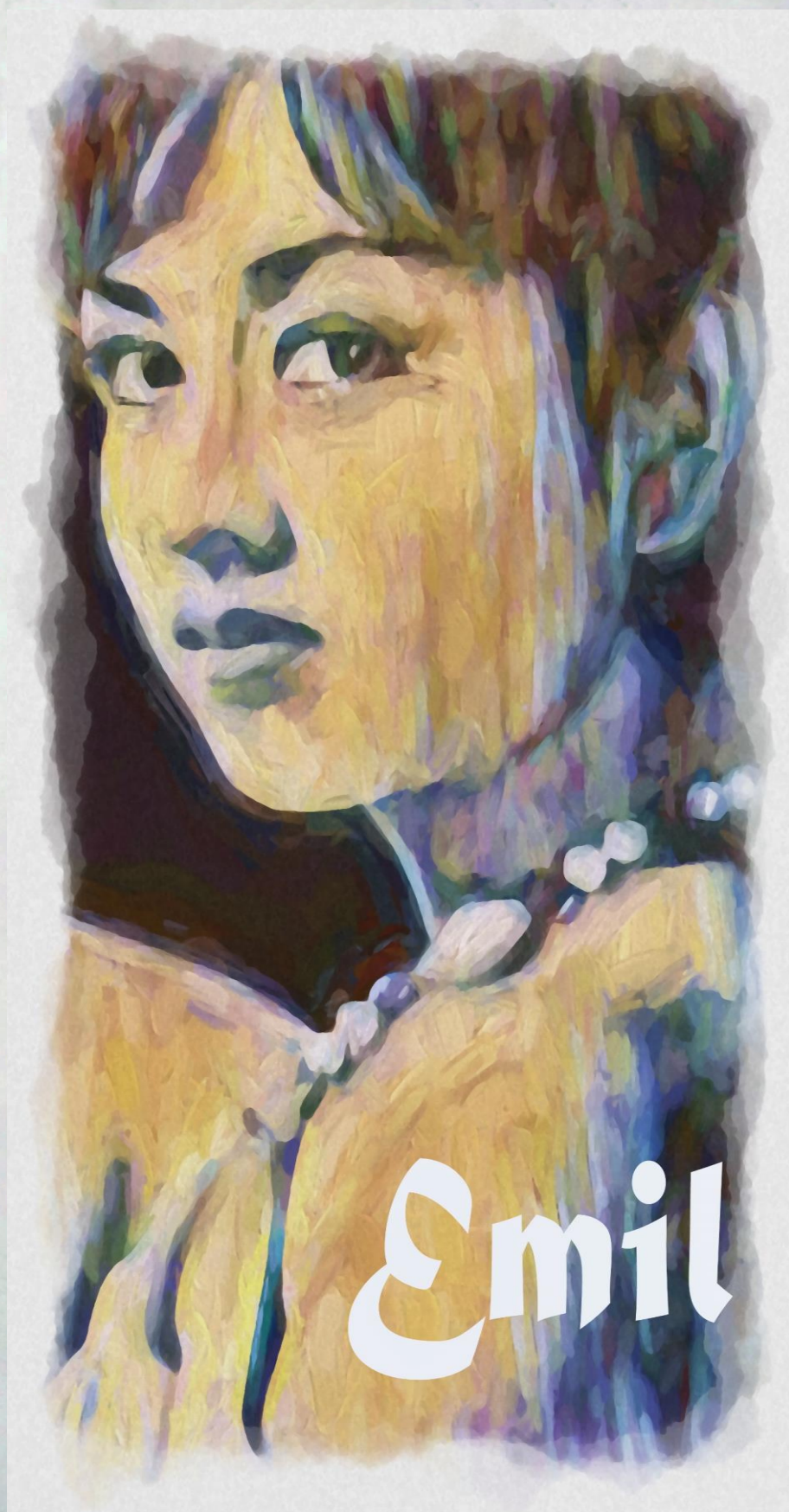
which is a compound of nature-worship and ancestor-worship. It has gods and goddesses of the wind, the ocean, fire, food, and pestilence, of mountains and rivers, of certain special mountains, certain rivers, certain trees, certain temples, — eight hundred myriads of deities in all.

We walked over and by a local neighborhood shrine dedicated to Ama-terasu, who seems to be a senior god in the religion's pantheon and who I am told is the radiant Goddess of the Sun and according to Mister Tuku, our current tour guide, she was actually born from the left eye of Izanagi (not far different that Athena from the head of Zeus) who just happens to be (like Zeus) the Creator of the Universe (Japan).

While there are many other shrines that are dedicated to other gods, the deified ghosts of princes and heroes of old, and while many of them command a wide popularity; her shrines are still honored and loved far above all the rest.

This was a rather small temple, not much larger than your standard shophouse but it is very nicely decorated and









illustrated with a wide range of wall murals and wood carving of many related to Chinese-like Mythologies.

Afterwards, we stopped at a nearby shop for a very nice but rather late lunch while we did some people watching with some interest as the shifts were changing at nearby factory.

It does surprise me that regardless of all the international embargos, the ever-increasing blockage(s) of the International Shipping Lanes and the complete destruction of the major airports ; I have seen no shortage of food or of most of the standard and common basics even in the smallest mom/pop store front.

I give much of the credit for this Herculean Feat to the mayor and his very efficient logistic staff who have personally seen to it that there are few if any shortages in the local markets.

Drats!

Our postman is here and is rather a patient man willing to cool his heels while I address this envelop so, out of my





Emil





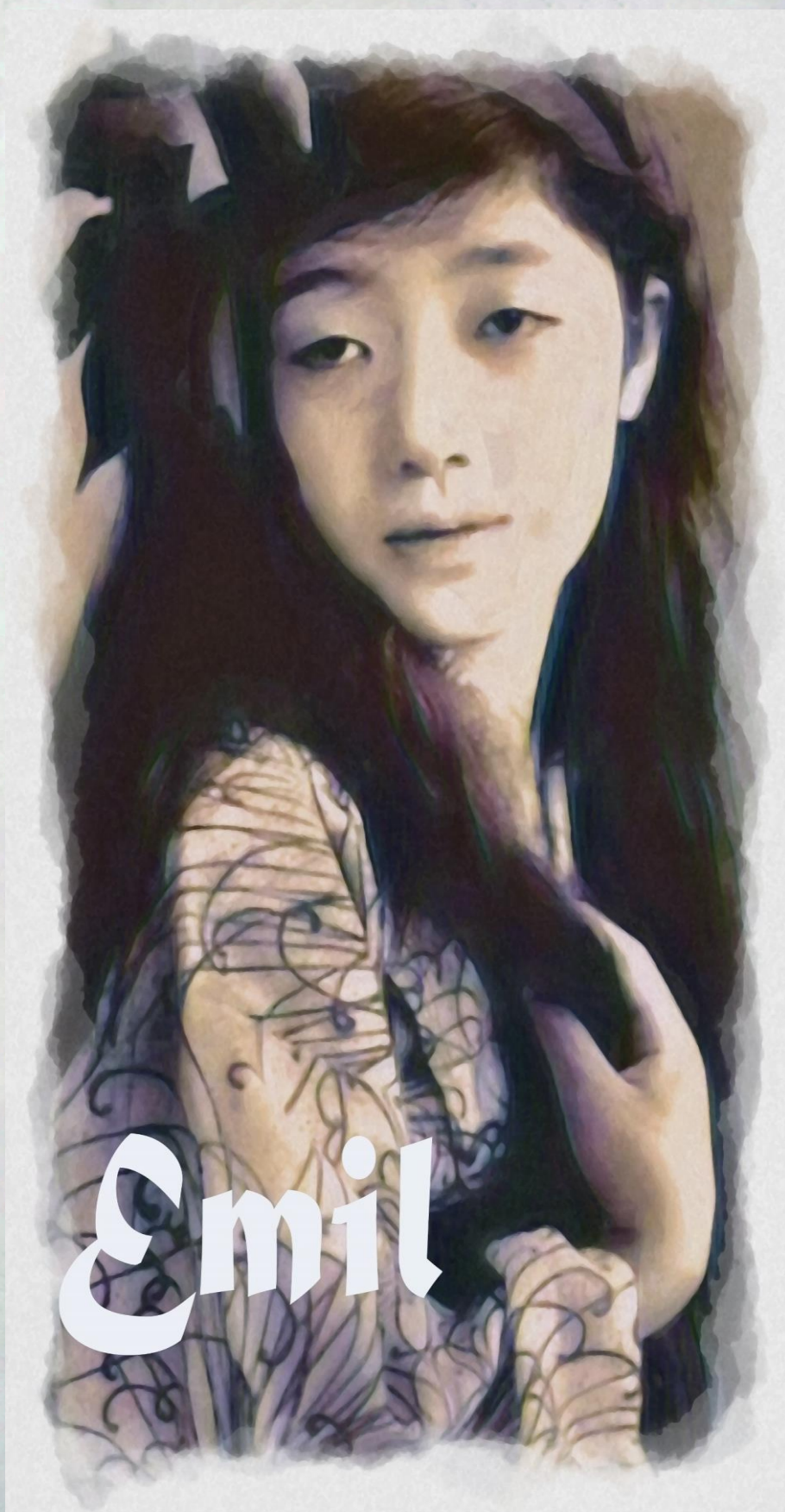
respect for his dutiful service; I must stop here and post this off to you in today's mail.

Again, with my deepest regards.

Your Friend,

**Max**





Emil





# Emil











20 July 1945

# Dear Emil,

Mister Schmitt made what he said was a yearly event to visit a far distant relative who laid buried in Hijiya Military Cemetery in Hijiya Park with his fellow French Legionaries...seems that there are many disjointed families that live amongst the frontiers of both France and Germany...Mister Schmitt said that in those days the border was much more just dots upon parchment paper maps than in the daily lives of these borderland folks.

The story of the whys and where's on how his Great Uncle lay buried a world-a-part from the rest of his family's kin but, Mister Schmitt tell us of a brave...NO! A fearless man of adventure who grew tired of farming and never had much any hankering to spent 14-hours-per-day in the deep bowls of the region's many coal mines.





Emil





One day he up and joined the French Army. His family asked "the French Army?"

He shrugged his shoulders and said that they were the only ones hiring.

Letter were far-in-between and it wasn't until a decorative post card arrived at his family home...it was from their son and the card had come all the way from China. It is not known whether he failed to mention why he was in China or if was merely that this was a postcard and he ran out of room.

This was about the turn of the 20th Century and China was deeply involved the final stages of a mighty and bitter revolution staged by viscous, anti-foreigner (Foreign Devils) that called themselves "Boxers." Many Western Nations were force to send crack troops to defend their interests in China as the old Queen had fallen by the wayside and there was a complete breakdown of civil authority...The Americans (with billions of investment dollars, cranky old missionaries and a





Emil





whole host of other business scallywags to defend) sent gunships packed with marines armed to the teeth and the French sent Mister Schmitt's uncle and the Legion to (as a famous French politico of the time noted) "put the true fear of the Westerner's God into the hearts of our little yellow brothers..."

No one (these days) can even recall the bitter battles to near death for some small piece of China at an endless number of crossroads and it seems that the French Military Command (steeped deeply in the battle tactics of the Great General Bonaparte) had not figured that the Boxers were not a well-trained, controlled militia that understood the correct standards and periodicals of a proper battlefield and suffered massive casualties and even more wounded.

Badly wounded but standing as the rear guard, he was among the last withdrawn on the Japanese Red Cross Ship "Hakuai Maru."









The ship docked at Hiroshima with many having died in transit from their battle wounds and more were to die in the coming week regardless of the first-class medical care available in the main hospital of the Hiroshima (which still stands and we had a tour of last week by proud medical officers who showed us through what was truly one of the higher-class hospitals that I had ever seen).

How and when Mister Schmitt's uncle passed on was never recorded or documents other than a telegram from the Legionaries Commanding General that explained that their son was not coming home for Christmas or any other holiday for that matter. It did note that with declining military budgets by the government prevented them from returning his body home for a proper burial. A follow up letter from his direct commander gave a few more details and supplied a map with directions to where he was buried.

Mister Schmitt told us his that his uncle had sent him the yellowed pages of that letter and asked him to check in on









him to see that he had been treated properly when they discovered that Mister Schmitt had accepted a trade post in Hiroshima.

Mister Schmitt told us of his first trip to the grave site as we left the Trade Office's staff car and walked up to the crest of the hill and looked out upon the most with a spectacular view of the ocean, which Mister Schmitt winked and said "the view stretched all the way to France...my family would be proud of the care that the people of Hiroshima had bestowed upon his uncle and the other 100-120 French Legionaries buried here..."

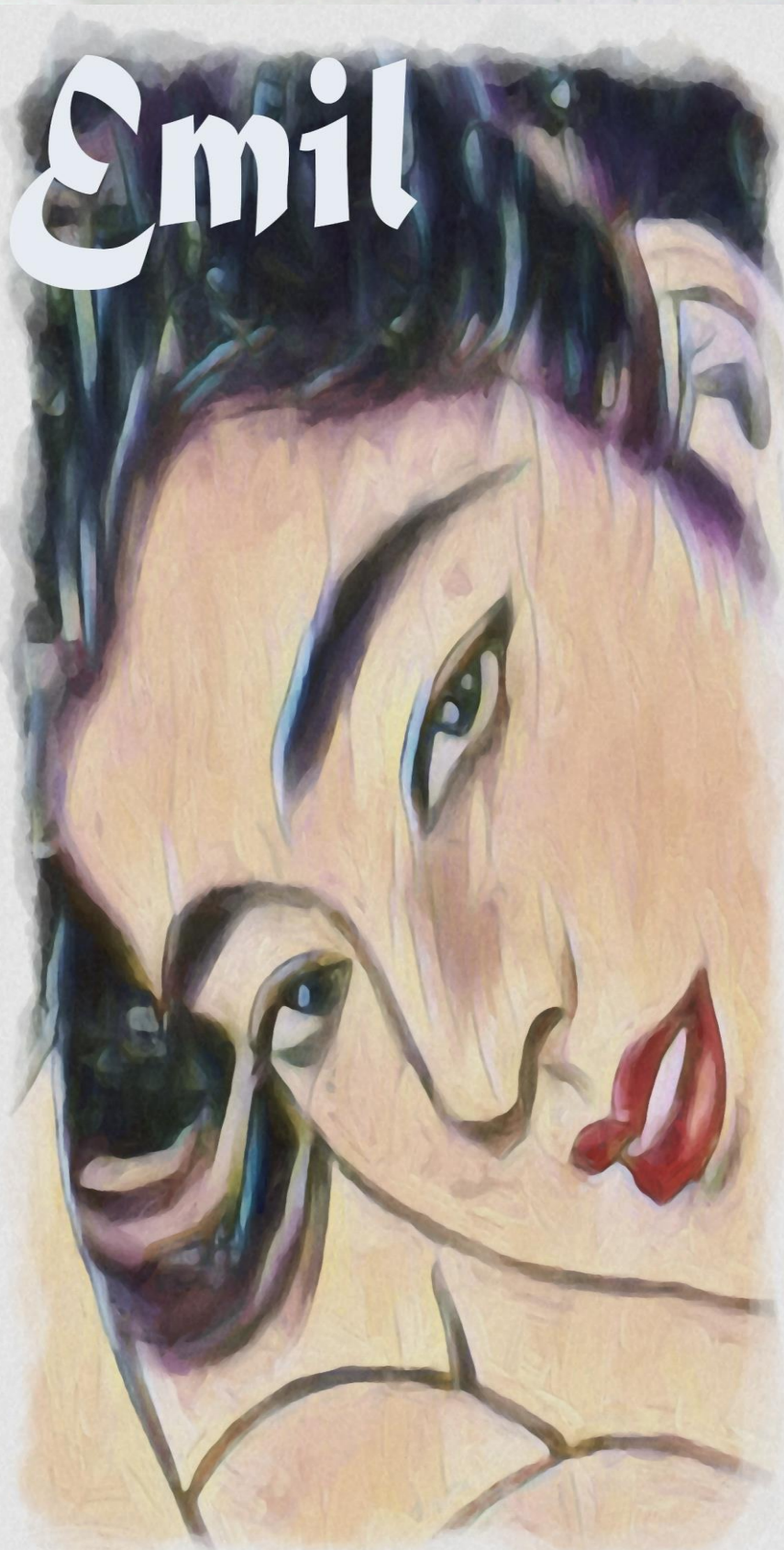
Indeed, the view was breathtaking as we stared out towards the Inland Sea.

"These days" Mister Schmitt spoke in a hushed tone out of no doubt a sense of proper respect for his uncle and his fellow Legionaries: "the cemetery, these days, is not widely known among locals because when it was built, they marked the site with cenotaph marked with a simple inscription carved.





# Emil







However, it was written only in Chinese and French and even today very few people read Chinese and fewer yet, know French."

The Trade Minister's driver brought a flower arrangement from the staff car's luggage compartment and we placed it centered at the cenotaph as a sign of our respect and to show that (after almost half-a-century their sacrifice was not (all) in vain.

After a short moment of silent prayer for the lost and wandering souls resting at the crest of this hill to find peace. Then, Mister Schmitt took what he assured us was one of the final bottles of fine American Whiskey in all of Hiroshima and poured out the entire bottle in the grass that lay about his great uncle's final resting place.

On the way back to town, the driver told us that this is a yearly pilgrimage to the gravesite and that he appreciated that we could be here in brothership with Mister Schmitt.









Again, our diligent postman is waiting in the lobby for me to finish yet another letter...

Given this and that we have a full evening planned, I will cut today's communications short and will follow up tomorrow with future business progress.

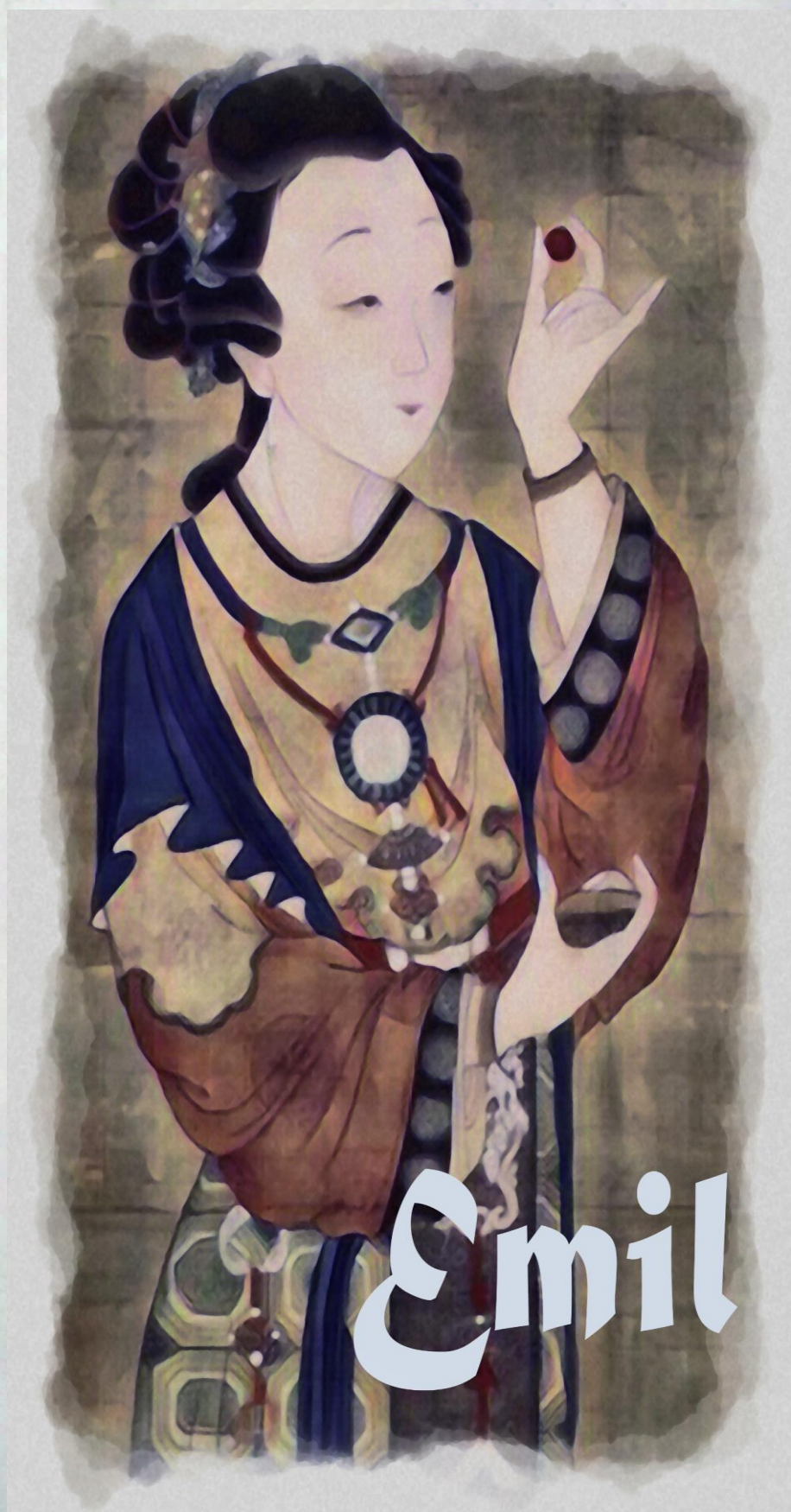
Your most humble servant!

**Max**

















**3 August 1945**

## Dear Emil,

I am penning this from a far different location that they tell me that I am NOT allowed to disclose but, it is fair to say that we are no longer in Hiroshima and someday, this might make an interesting store even though I am without a clue as to what is happening.

This all started yesterday morning as we were getting ready to make a new round of investigating new commercial properties around the Shintenchu Shopping District with a further trip down to some harbor properties that we saw the other day (as my business partner Clyde brought to our attention as these might be primo venues for any American establishment of the city as a logistics center after the invasion – much as I had already noted in a previous letter) at the Ujina Harbor which is located at the south of the city









facing out towards the seemingly endless expanses of the Great inland Sea; when out of the blue, Mister Schmitt ring us up with what he declared was an urgent, vital call of the highest emergency.

That seemed rather odd given that it was so early into the day and seeing that he was well aware of how busy the schedule was for the day. Not be of a rude nature especially towards a man that had so helped us in our business, I took the time to take his call as I figured that Mister Schmitt did not strike me as a man given to dry humor, rumor nor who would call business associates on some lark...so, I took his call without hesitation.

I must admit that this was by far the strangest call that I had ever taken part in even compared to those late-night calls from Seine seeking Swedish Travel Papers for some rather important personages (still to remain nameless...right Seine?) when we were all in Berlin.





Emil





In the past months here in Hiroshima, I had found and would give testament to the reality that Mister Schmitt is a solid man who had never shown even a twinkle of a weak mind or insanity (even when long in to drink with us in “Snake Town”) and yet, this call (had I not been associated with him previously) bordered on a man driven utterly to senseless babbling fear as he informed us that his Trade Mission had immediate orders to withdraw the entire Trade Commission’s staff from the city post-haste (today) without baggage or any of their files and that due to our friendship with Emil/Seine that he had been able to secure one of the last seats on the departing lorry leaving no later than 3 PM.

Using my most calming tone and respect for Mister Schmitt, I begged his understanding that we had a very busy day ahead and as I started to explain that we were planning to leave several deposits on the Ujina Harbor Warehouses that I mentioned earlier; at this point, he interrupted me and in solidly commanding voice he declared that he would be









dispatching his driver to pick us up at our apartment at about noon to take us directly to the assembled caravan of waiting lorries before finishing his orders with a dire warning that we were NOT to mention this to anyone or we would suffer a faith far worse than dead as he noted that we would be left behind and have to face the coming trials on our own.

What was one to sensibly make of this far beyond strange call?

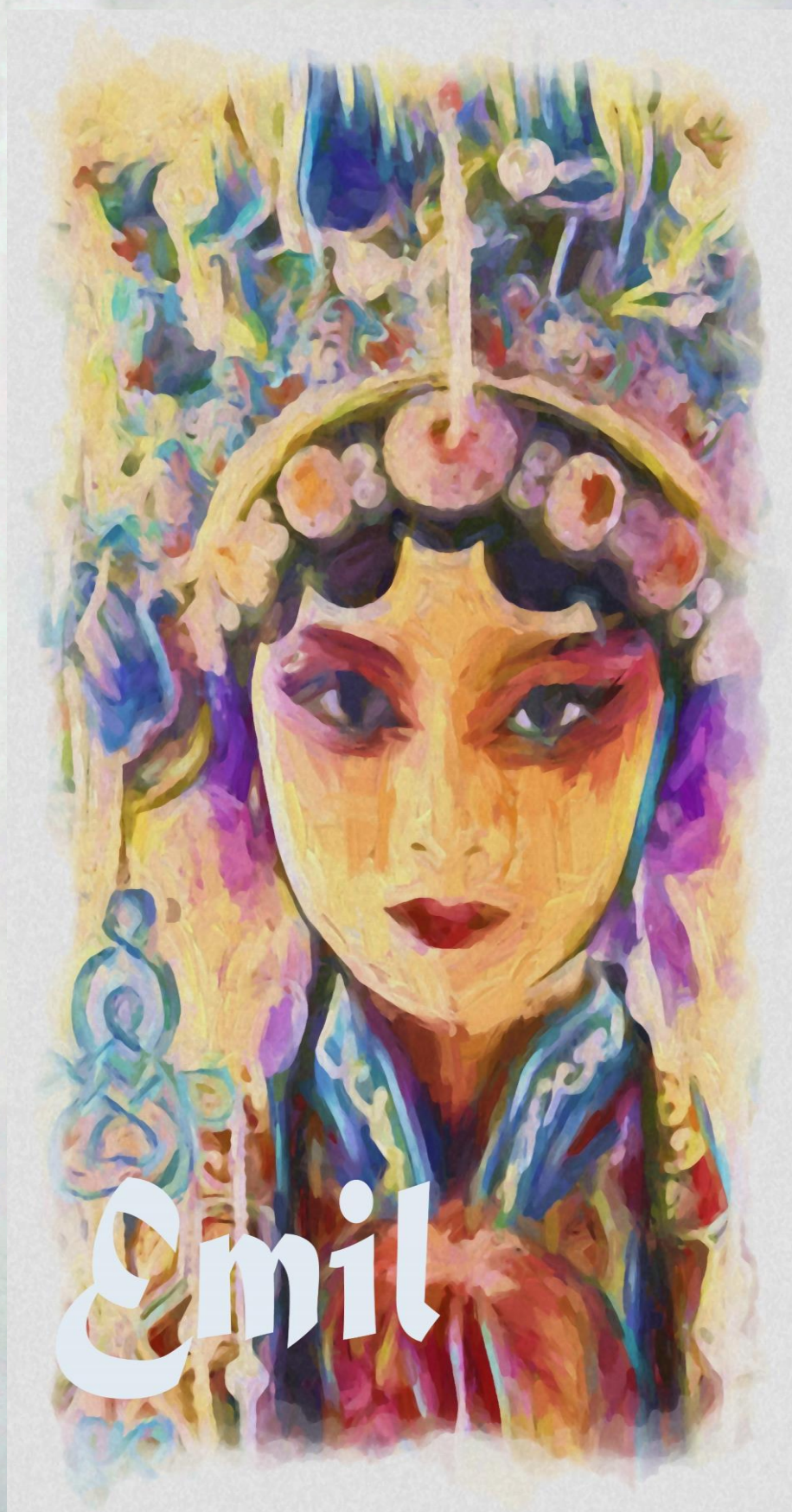
We all agreed that there was something about to happen but, why is so much secrecy involved with comments such as “tell anyone and you will surely be left to die!”

Most of our group agreed that Mister Schmitt might have warned of some massive attack...

Air Raid?

Maybe, he had advanced warning that the long-feared Invasion was about to become a real war?









The part that troubled us the most was that we were threatened not to share with any of the locals.

This seemed so wrong and out of character for either Mister Schmitt or us and I thought how could I not tell the young lady with whom I had shared three long evenings of star watching out at the Shukkei-en Gardens.

Remember, the local customs here are very clear in that they say that on three dates, you are considered engaged and it was time to meet her family to discuss marriage.

I must admit that this troubled me more than you might even imagine as I had grown rather fond of her and we had talked about a future together after the war finally ends.

How could I just chuck all that and not even warn her and her family that they were about to join the war in what must be a most dire way or why else would the German Trade Commission pick up their tent and run for the hills without concern for their own personal property or even the Commission's extensive files.









I thought to ring Mister Schmitt back and plead for yet another seat for my young lady friend but given our last heated debate over my insistence on continuing a relationship with her against all of his protests and wise warning that it would never end happily for either of us; I figured that it would be a lost cause and might even lead to my business partners being left behind to.

Not being a part of any part of the truth about what was happening much less on what was going to happen, collectively as a group we voted to stay hungered down here and wait for noon. We dared not even go out for breakfast as we feared we might slip something and create the panic that Mister Schmitt seemed trying so hard to prevent.

Good to his word, Mister Schmitt's driver arrived promptly at noon and supplied each of us a small knack shack in which we were to put our important papers, money, passports and he told us that we had five minutes to complete this and be quietly sitting in the staff car...ready to go if we didn't elect to be left behind.





# Emil







We drove through the city streets and everything seemed strikingly normal with people going about their regular tasks and I clearly remember the smiles of the school children as we pulled past their school and into the back driveway of the Trade Commission Compound.

There were (I counted) three pre-war military-style lorries already packed with an assortment of people who looked even more bewildered than we were at the time.

There was no panic, there was no mad confusion and the people inside the lorries sat deathly silent...oh there was an occasional chat between friends or family but overall, the mood was like that of a conservative, missionary wake...

Our seats were on the third and last of the lorries in the courtyard and from how full it was already; we could see our great luck to have been befriended by Mister Schmitt.

As planned, the lorries pulled out onto the back, side street of the Commission at precisely 3 PM as Mister Schmitt had conveyed to me on the phone.





Emil





Where was Mister Schmitt?

No one seemed to hear us over the whine of the large diesel motors as we took the back roads out of town and seemed to be heading north or north-east...it was hard to tell with the sun now covered by low clouds that were now hovering over the city with random light rays streaking through the clouds in a most eerie way – like a twilight at mid day.

We were about an hour into our journey when a young kid (early 20's) nervously started jabbering in what seemed more nerves than any sense of conducting a real conversation with me. I smiled and let him work the nervousness out of his system (I find that there is no better or more productive means of getting people to trust you than by just shutting up and letting them continue talking about themselves).

He seemed like a nice kid that had been sent here by his family who seemed to have some connection with the German or Nippon Foreign Ministries and seemed to be ensuring his safety from military conception when most









young men of his age were being scooped up and sent packing off to Russia in some futile attempt to stem the Red Tide of the ever growing-more-powerful Red Army as it marched steadily towards Berlin.

I mentioned Mister Schmitt and the kid's face lit up as I had just mentioned his favorite comic book, super hero and you could see all of his tension fall from his face down onto the cluttered floorboards of our dirty lorry.

I asked if he had seen Mister Schmitt and if he was in one of the other lorries. With that simple question, this young man seemed to reach down, literally pulling up all of his tension back over his head and all he could muster was a frown like I have never seen – part sadness and part disappointment.

I took a few moments to give him the time to balance himself before I inquired further. "Where is Mister Schmitt?"

Silence...I asked again but, in a more forceful tone, I expected that this kid would respond without question as it was breeding him to be responsible to authority...





Emil





Thanks to that Damn Hitler Young Program!

As expected, without any direct eye contact (that obedience was also well bred into these German Youths of this era) he offered up a conversation that he had with Mister Schmitt before the lorries arrived and "He said that he would be a long but, he had some unfinished business with the adjoining school..."

"Unfinished business?"

"Yes! Something to do with the children as he was well-known for his fondness of them and had almost single handedly raised the funds to reopen the school when the former headmaster took the school's accounts and hopped a midnight steamer to (they say was) Shanghai or was it Hong Kong...WELL! It was somewhere over there in China..."

On one hand, this struck me first as rather odd and then, I could see that if something terrible was going to fall upon Hiroshima that it would be him (Mister Schmitt) that would see to it that those children (many orphans due to the Air









War or were a more common, sundry assortment of youngsters missing a dad or even a mom to those (as the widow who lived above me so bitter and often complained of) a most angry, evil wars in the West).

What a brave man!

What a heart!

I only hope that what is going to happen...I hope that it doesn't and more so, I hope that Mister Schmitt and the children will join us sooner than later!

The rest of the ride with a now more than chatty young man recalling his (rather ordinary but boring) school years in Homburg before getting his commission to the Trade Commission.

I did ask him what he knew about the War in Europe and he shrugged it off as just rude rumors and that he was sure that any setbacks would soon be reversed...he claims that Mister Schmitt had told him that directly just last week. Sad!





Emil





The kid had no idea that his war was over and that he could (if he could find transport) go home and back to continue his vocational school training...He mentioned that his uncle was an electrician and he had a very good life before the war working at some big auto factory down in Southern Germany.

It wasn't my place or my duty to explain any of this to this scared kid sitting in the back of a speeding lorry bound for a location he didn't know and fleeing some terrible action of which he knew even less. So, I let be and let him talk all through the night.

We had to stop several times to beg petrol and once for the American Bombers to fly by. They must be closing in as I was certain that I saw that the bombers had some kind of fighter escort in the formation as they overflew us at near sunset...

What an impressive sight to see.

By the next midmorning and you could see that we had traveled northwards and inland when we made a final stop for petrol and we were told to pull down the blackout









curtains that lined each lorry's cargo compartment.

Arriving where...?

I haven't a clue and still don't know but it does seem somewhat rural as there is no big city noises as we passed the final miles in blackout darkness.

We have been housed in what seems to be a series of large underground bunkers that are well-lighted (I can hear the hum of nearby generators) and so, I am writing all this down before the 10 PM lights out order and they said that due to our status with the Trade Commission, we would be allowed mail services in the morning(s) while we are temporarily house here (with restrictions on disclosing our location and that sort of thing security concerns).

I continue to ask about Mister Schmitt and what is going on but, it falls upon deaf ears as it seems that the majority of our junior hosts (guards...they are heavily armed) speak only Japanese and as I noted that I have little or command of such language.





Emil





I did talk to Mister Schmitt's driver (who is one of the few locals to joins us on this journey) and in a guarded, a hush tone he did mention that he had overheard that there had been a military coup in Tokyo and we were taken here to not make ourselves hostage to one faction or another...if true.

**(Hope that they aren't actually censoring our correspondents or else you never got to read this)**

He had no clue as to Mister Schmitt's current location and I know this is true as he asked me much the same question.

So...here I am...underground as it seems...

To be truthful, it isn't bad and the breakfast bell just rang...

I will drop this off at the mail desk in the canteen lobby and hope to write more later.

Your Friend!

**MAX**







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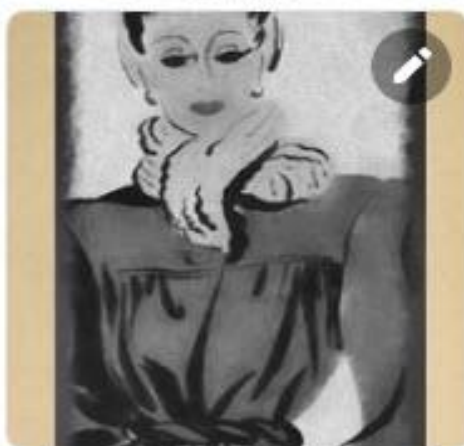
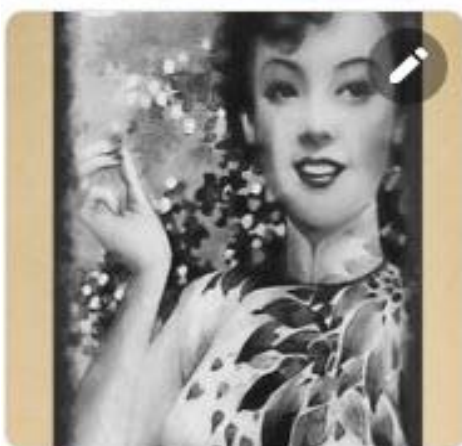
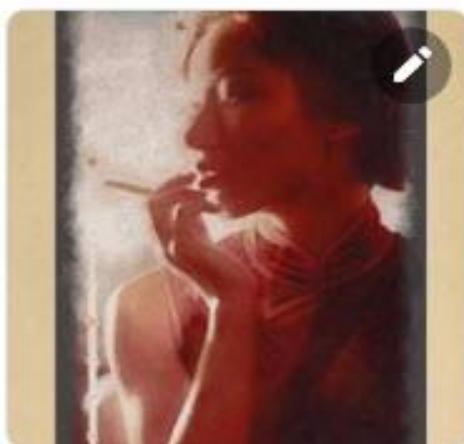
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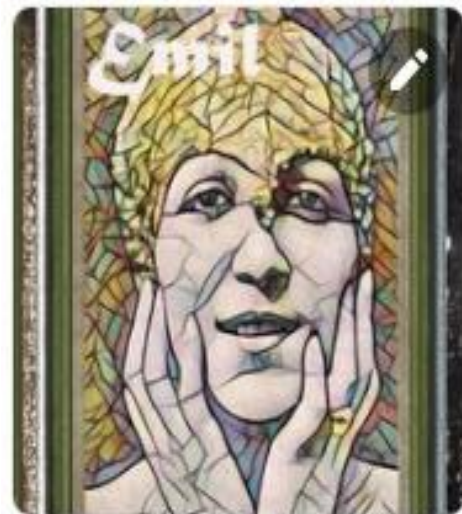
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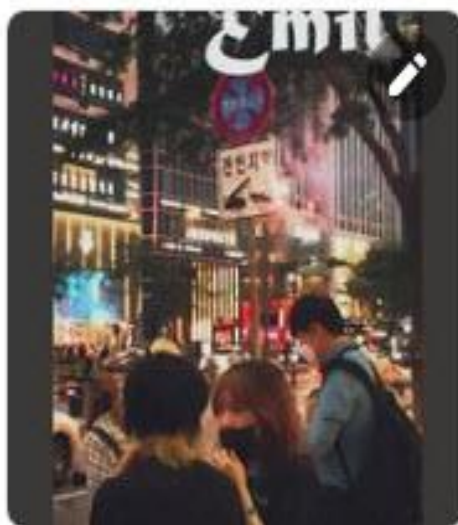
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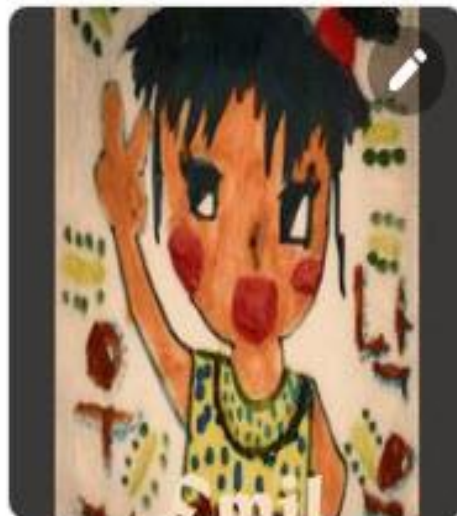
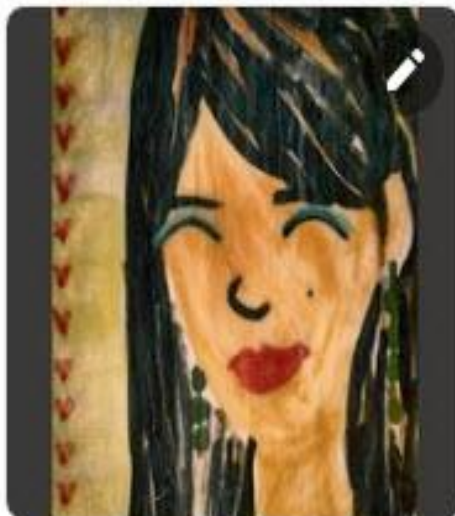
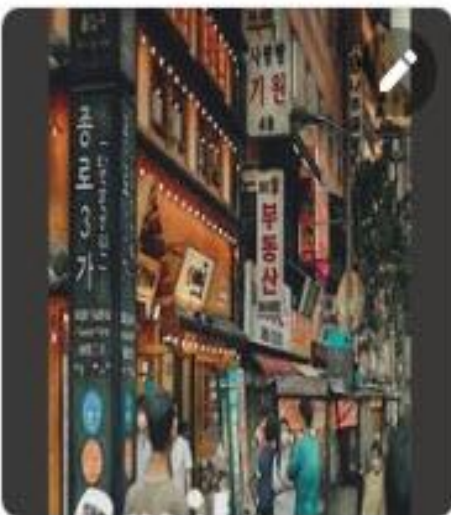
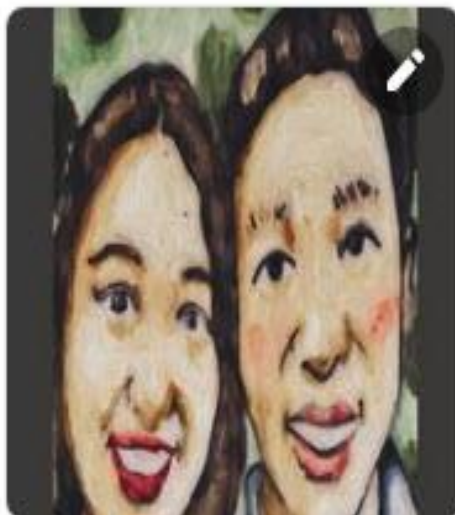
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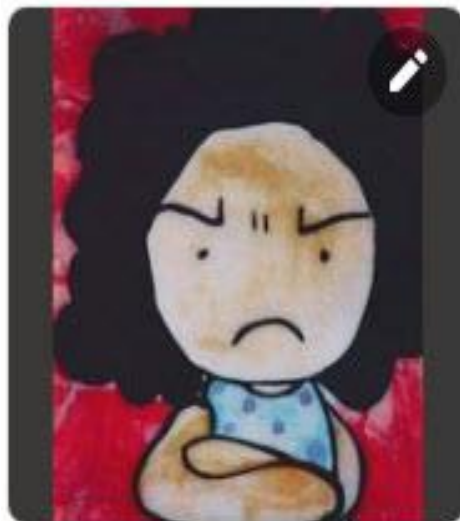
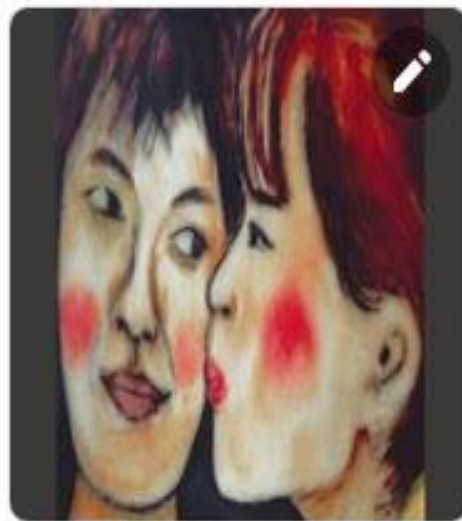
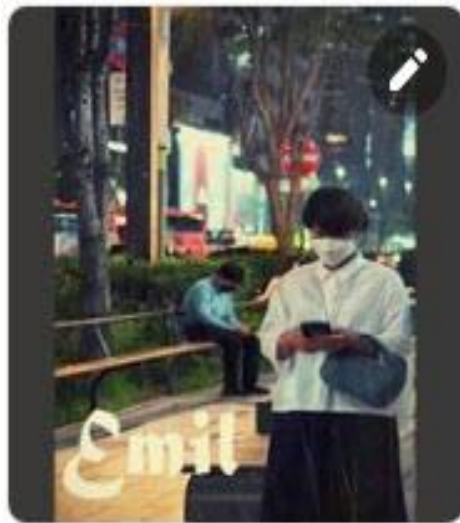
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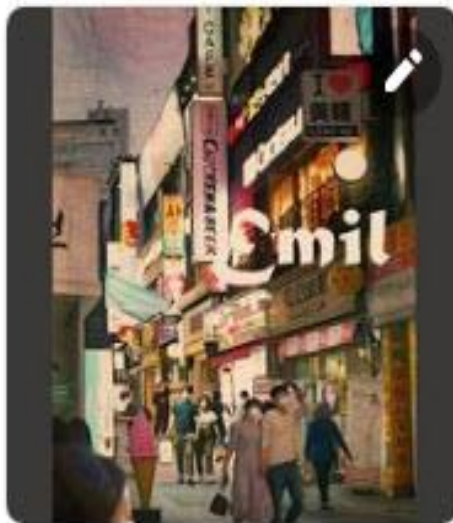
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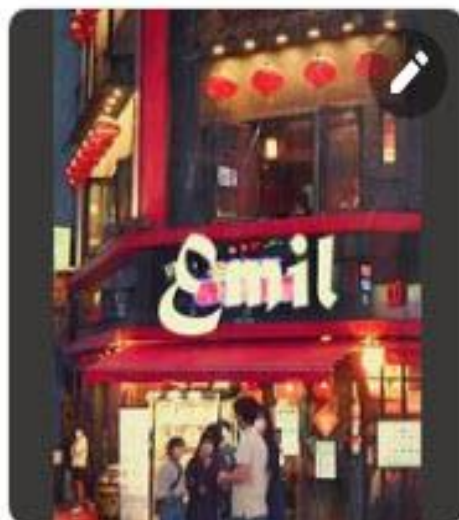
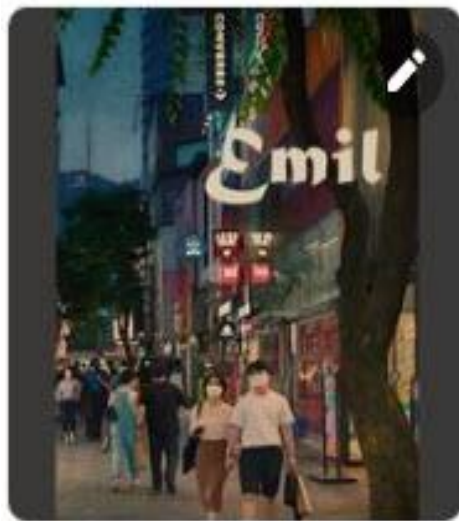
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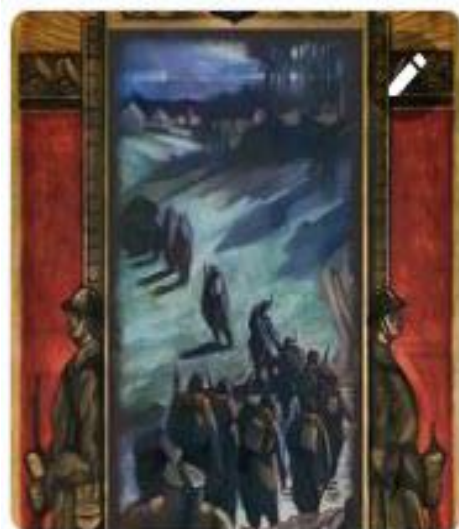
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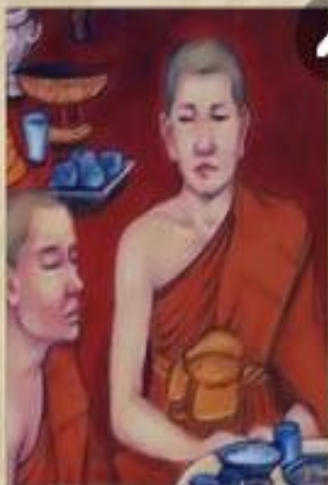
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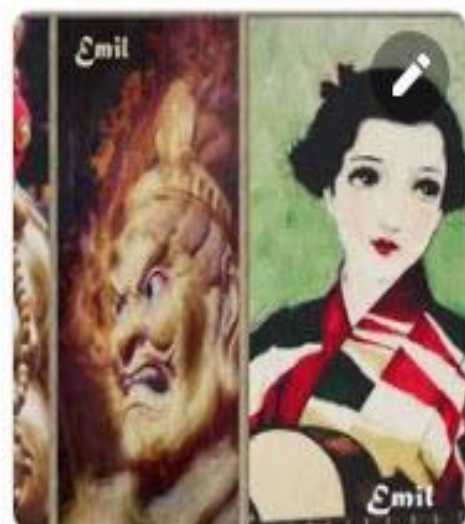
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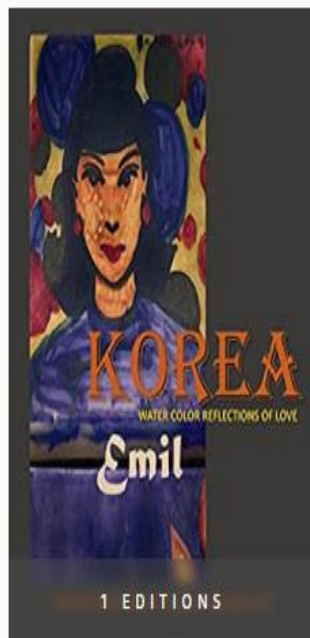
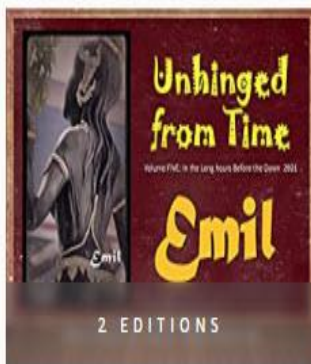
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